



District 2 Town Meeting

Please join me for a discussion on the Regional Human Services Funding Crisis. Laura Wells, of Child Care Resources and Chair of the King County Alliance for Human Services, will be our guest.

When: Saturday, October 2, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Where: Hearthstone Retirement Community
(6720 E. Green Lake Way N.)

I will be available until noon to discuss other issues important to you.

For directions or more information, please call
(206) 296-1002.

Bob Ferguson
Metropolitan King County Council
King County Courthouse
516 Third Ave., Rm. 1200
Seattle, WA 98104-3272



A letter from Councilmember Bob Ferguson



Dear Neighbor:

This newsletter focuses on human services funding. We may not always think about it, but access to human services affects us all. It's about your neighbor who was a victim of domestic

violence that found safety in a shelter. It's about your friend who is developmentally disabled and cannot find a job. It's about your grandmother living alone who needs help getting her meals.

I believe that government has a responsibility to assist citizens achieve a high quality of life. Investment in human services also makes good financial sense

because many programs prevent greater costs in the future when problems may become more severe. Unfortunately, before I joined the Council this January, significant cuts to human services were made and more are predicted this fall.

We cannot afford to cut human services— that is why King County formed the Task Force on Regional Human Services, to provide recommendations for maintaining and improving the regional human services system. As Chair of the Regional Policy Committee, I will lead a review of the Task Force report. My priority is to find a dedicated revenue source to pay for crucial human services.


Please join me on Saturday, October 2, at 10:00 a.m. for a town meeting dedicated to Regional Human Services.

It is an honor to represent you on the King County Council. I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming town meeting and hearing your feedback on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Bob Ferguson

Bob Ferguson
King County Councilmember, District 2



Human Services Crisis

District 2

Metropolitan King County Councilmember

Bob Ferguson

September 2004



NEWS

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King County

District 2

Metropolitan King County Councilmember

Bob Ferguson

September 2004

Town Meeting

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What are Human Services?

Human services encompass a wide array of programs that affect all of us or someone we know. The following is a small sample of services provided in King County:

- Aging:** food delivery for home-bound seniors, companionship through Elderfriends, and elder abuse prevention and support.
- Veterans:** trauma counseling, mental health services, and emergency housing.
- Children:** early intervention services and support for special needs or developmentally delayed children.
- At-risk youth:** work training, GED preparation, and job skills training and counseling.
- Unemployed:** new job skills training through the Dislocated Worker Program.
- Developmental disabilities:** employment assistance, medical coverage, and accessible Metro transportation
- Women's Program:** women's emergency shelters, crisis response phone lines, and survivor assistance for victims of domestic violence or sexual assault.
- Homelessness:** emergency shelters, homelessness prevention, transitional and supportive housing, and assessment and treatment.
- Mental Health:** counseling and treatment for children and adults in need.
- Alternative Sentencing:** intensive probation, community service, drug treatment, and residential and non-residential programs.
- Alcohol/drug abuse:** alcohol and drug treatment assessment.

Task Force on Regional Human Services

The King County Task Force on Regional Human Services recently released their report detailing the following recommendations:

Need for a Dedicated Revenue Source

The County budget is in crisis and facing \$20 million in cuts this year alone. Other local governments are also experiencing budget deficits. King County currently supports regional human services and public health with approximately \$17 million during the past fiscal year. The Task Force determined that the need for human services outweighed the current availability due to inadequate funding and lack of regional sources of revenues. With further cuts to human services looming, support for a regional human services system is critical.

To generate a dedicated revenue source, the Task Force supports a new voter-approved initiative to be approved by 2006. The Task Force also recommends the formation of a Regional Human Services Board, a collaborative body to oversee the new revenue, planning, access, quality based on outcome measures, and identify areas with duplicate services.

Prevention Reduces Costs in Future

A dedicated revenue source for regional human services is essential, one that can put a greater focus on prevention to reduce costs over the long term. For example, a child abuse prevention program now will reduce future costs of child welfare services, healthcare, mental health, and law enforcement.

The Task Force also recommends intervention to prevent future intensive service needs that are more expensive to provide. For example, in King County Juvenile Justice treatment intervention, research shows that \$1 spent now saves \$10 in the future.

No Cuts to Current Funding

The final recommendation of the report is that no further funding cuts should be made to human services by local or county governments. I support this recommendation and throughout the County's budget deliberations this fall, I will work to sustain the current level of human services funding.

To view the report from the Task Force on Regional Human Services, please visit <http://www.metrokc.gov/exec/tfrhs/> or contact my office.



Pictured with me are Sandra Kortum, District 2 representative to the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Homeless Encampments (CACHE), and Lake City and University District Christian Church

members. In May, I spent the night at the Lake City Tent City after volunteering at the food bank with my staff. In response to the public uproar over the placement of Tent City at the Brickyard Park & Ride in Bothell, the King County Council formed the CACHE to analyze homelessness and the need for homeless encampments in King County. The CACHE recently released their report on homelessness. To find out more, visit <http://www.metrokc.gov/dchs/CACHE>.



Constituent Coffees

Every Friday, I meet with constituents one-on-one over a cup of coffee to discuss issues important to you. If you would like to schedule a constituent coffee to further discuss any of the topics from this newsletter or any other issue, please contact my office.

Regional Cooperation Needed



As Chair of the Regional Policy Committee (RPC), I have the opportunity to focus on regional human services. The RPC consists of leaders from King County, City of Seattle, and the suburban cities. It is exactly the place for realistic dialogue on a regional system for human services to occur, based on collaboration and partnership. The combined efforts of King County, City of Seattle, and the suburban cities, encompass approximately \$36 million dollars in support for regional human services.

To compliment the work of the Task Force, the RPC is currently performing an independent analysis of human services that are provided through state and federal funding. Once this work is completed in October, we should have a clear picture of the whole system of human services. My goal is to begin working on implementing recommendations by the end of this year.

Funding Health and Human Services

As a member of the Budget and Fiscal Management Committee, I am working hard to identify and preserve critical District 2 health and human services.

- University District Youth Center:** \$5,000 in new funding is secured for the University District Youth Center to be used for the pre-employment training program. The center offers high school completion, GED preparation classes, and employment counseling for homeless youth.
- Public Health:** \$813,935 is restored for Community Health Centers, a previously reduced program. This is supported by additional funds from the City of Seattle. In District 2, the North Public Health Center is located at 10501 Meridian Avenue North.
- Prevention Services:** \$199,967 is dedicated to Jail Health for development and implementation of a Methadone Treatment program for opiate-addicted inmates incarcerated in the County jail and Regional Justice Center. This is one example of prevention costs saving tax payer dollars in the future. With drug treatment while incarcerated, once the inmate is released they are drug-free and less likely to re-offend.



Bob Hathaway, North Helpline Food Bank Director of Distribution, and I setup for the food bank. Each month, my staff and I volunteer at a different District 2 organization. From park clean-ups to serving birthday lunch at senior centers—this is the most rewarding activity we do as an office. If you know of an organization that can use our time, please contact my office.



DISTRICT 2 ACTION-GRAM

Name: _____

E-mail address: _____

Mailing address: _____

Zip: _____

My question, concern, or idea is: _____
